The Orthodox Herald

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ALL TOGETHER

There is a day on which all the archangels are commemorated. This is on November 8/24. However, upon examining the special hymns and prayers for the day, we find that most of them are dedicated to Michael. Both Michael and Gabriel are designated as the "leaders of the angelic armies" in the New Testament. Raphael is mentioned in Tobit 5:4 in the Old Testament.

From the beginning of Christian history there is evidence for the honor in which Michael was held, and he was also venerated by the Jews. There was a church in the environs of Constantinople bearing his name which was built during the time of Constantine.

He was looked upon as a special guardian of the sick. Not too long ago a song of American Negro origin "Michael, row the boat ashore Alleluia!" incorporated a reminiscence of the very old tradition of Michael as the receiver of the souls of the dead.

At the Matin Service most of the prayers clearly tell us what we should know about Archangel Michael. Here is one hymn:

"O Michael, leader of the divine hosts of exceeding glory, you have been appointed by God as leader of the dominions, powers, archangels, angels, thrones, and principalities. Wherefore, since you stand before the unapproachable throne – shelter, watch, preserve, and save all those who celebrate your memory in faith, O prince of the world."

* * * * * *

The sun will set without your assistance.

Talmud

LET US GIVE THANKS

An old poem describes a woman walking through a meadow, meditating on nature. While strolling about, she came upon a field of golden pumpkins. In the corner of the field stood a majestic, huge oak tree.

She sat under the oak tree musing on the strange twists in nature which put tiny acorns on huge branches and huge pumpkins on tiny vines. She thought to herself, "God blundered with Creation! He should have put the small acorns on the tiny vines and the large pumpkins on the huge branches."

Nodding off, the woman stretched out under the oak tree for a nap. A few minutes after falling asleep she was awakened by a tiny acorn bouncing off her nose. Chuckling to herself, she rubbed her nose and thought, "Maybe God was right after all!"

For all the blessings we have received this year, whether they be seen or unseen, recognized or disguised, let us offer a Prayer of Thanksgiving unto the Lord! For He knows what we need even before we ask or are aware of it!

"O Lord our God: You have called us by a holy calling to lift up our hands and to render homage to your righteous judgement. Accept our prayers, devotions, requests, and adoration. Grant us, O God, an invincible faith, an unshakeable hope, and love sincere. Bless our comings and goings, our deeds and works, our words and desires. Grant that we may praise, sing, and bless the lavishness of Your bounty which is beyond description, for blessed is Thy holy name and glorified is Thy kingdom. Father, Son, and Holy

(Continued on Page 51, Col. 1)

PRESENTATION

On November 21/December 4 we celebrate the Entrance or Presentation of the Mother of God into the Temple. This is not mentioned in the Scriptures but is found in The Apocryphal book the Protoevangelion of James 7:1-8:1.

It reads:

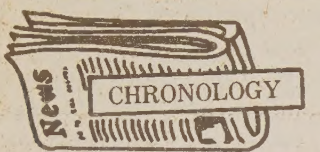
The months passed and the child grew. When she was two years old, Joachim said to Anna, "Let us bring her up to the temple of the Lord, so that we may fulfill the promise which we made, lest the Lord send (some evil) upon us and our gift become unacceptable." And Anna replies: "Let us wait until the third year, that the child may then no more long after her father and mother. And Joachim said: "Very well."

And when the child was three years old, Joachim said: "Let us call the undefiled daughters of the Hebrews, and let each take a lamp, and let it be burning, in order that the child may not turn back and her heart be enticed away from the temple of the Lord." And he did so until they went up to the temple of the Lord. And the priest took her and kissed her and blessed her, saying: "The Lord has magnified your name among all generations; because of you the Lord at the end of days will manifest his redemption to the children of Israel."

And he placed her on the third step of the altar, and the Lord God put grace upon the child, and she danced for joy with her feet, and the whole house of Israel loved her. And her parents went down wondering, praising and glorifying the almighty God because the child did not turn back to them. And Mary was in the

(Continued on Page 51, Col. 2)

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NOVEMBER 2008

DIED: FATHER NICHOLAS DOTSON in Boulder, CO

THE 15th ALL-AMERICAN COUNCIL will be held in Pittsburgh, PA in November to elect a new metropolitan to head the OCA.



A CARPATHIAN MOUNTAIN STYLE CHAPEL has been consecrated in June at All Saints Ukrainian Orthodox Camp in Emlenton, PA. It was dedicated to St. Thomas and is built in the style of the Carpathian highland inhabitants – the Boykos and the Hutsuls. The camp is located 80 miles north of Pittsburgh and was purchased in 1978. For more info write: PO Box 495, So. Bound Brook, NJ 08880.

A REGIONAL GROUP has left the American Baptist Churches USA. Over 300 congregations will continue to send mission-related funding but will withhold $150,000 for national administrative work. Members said the deep differences of theological convictions and values, especially over homosexuality, has caused the rift. A spokesman said: "We're caught in a tug-of-war that's caught all Christendom, which is the tug-of-war between right and center."

OLD WIRELESS (CELL) PHONES ARE NEEDED. www.wirelessfoundation.org will give you information on local drop-off points. These old phones are reprogrammed and distributed through agencies to people who fear domestic violence. Telephone companies provide free emergency air time, so if the user needs to escape a harmful situation, they can use their donated phone to dial for help.

WE ARE INTERACTING MORE WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER RELIGIONS. What is proper when we are invited to their ceremonies? What are the taboos? Should you invite them to Christmas and Pascha activities? For answers the address is www.beliefnet.com/story/45/story/4549/1.html at www.beliefnet.com

REAL BREAK is a program for college and university students by Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF). Real Break is an alternative-to-spring-break providing students with short term trips and projects. For info call 800-919-1623 or website www.ocf.net.

RECYCLE YOUR GREETING CARDS. Send them to mother Katarina at 321 Monastery Lane, Ellwood City, PA 16117.

A CHURCH IN MINNESOTA has banned a 13-year-old from attending Mass. The church leaders said that the boy is disruptive and his erratic behavior threatens the safety of other parishioners.

TWO MANNED VESSELS are being used by Russian scientists in an attempt to dive to the bottom of the world's deepest body of water. The lake, which is 5,500 feet deep, contains about a fifth of the world's fresh water.

THE SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE on Orthodox schools was held recently. There are 83 private Orthodox schools in the U.S. For info on the Orthodox School Assoc. go to www.orthodoxschool.org.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO ORDER the Little Falcons for your religious education classes. It is written primarily for children but adults will find it edifying. A quarterly, the topics this year are: blessed water, healing oil, good wine and holy liturgy. For info: PO Box 371, Grayslake, IL 60030 or phone 1-847-223-4300 or e-mail little falcons@owc.net.

MAY 28-31 has been set as the next Ancient Christianity Conference to be held in Indianapolis next year. It is being sponsored by the Brotherhood of Saint Moses the Black. The conference will target those who have little exposure to Orthodox Christianity as well as the faith's African roots. For more info www.mosestheblack.org.

FOLLOWING TRADITION some parishes are constructing arches at the entrance to their parish cemeteries, among these are St. Michael's parish in Jermyn, PA and St. Nicholas parish in Auburn, NY.

IN AN EFFORT TO BUILD AWARENESS of Orthodoxy in the Moose Jaw, SK, Canada region, the parish held an open house, which included a brunch and a tour of the newly-renovated church building. Moose Jaw is important in the early history of our church. Newly-ordained priests in the early 20th century were assigned there for their first assignment. The eminent Fr. Vladinir Broichevsky was born there while his father Stachy was assigned as pastor.

A CHAPEL HAS BEEN CONSECRATED at Presentation of Virgin Mary Women's Monastery in Marshfield, Missouri. The monastery has been relocated here from Ohio. It was established 10 years ago. For info: www.presentationmonastery.org.

METROPOLITAN HILARION has been enthroned as the first hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, replacing Metropolitan Laurus, who died on March 16. Born Igor Kapral in Canada he is a graduate of Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, NY and earned a master's degree from Syracuse University.

(Continued from front page)

LET US GIVE THANKS

Spirit, now and forever more. Amen."

(Continued from front page)

PRESENTATION

temple nurtured like a dove and received food from the hand of an angel.

ANGELS

Yes, the Orthodox Church believes in angels. On November 8/21 we find the Synaxis (Meeting) of Archangels Michael, Gabriel and all the Heavenly Hosts.

Isn't it strange that in our materialistic world, where many conclude that the only real things are those we experience with our five senses, they, nevertheless, are intrigued with angels?

Our Church teaches us that there is another realm of reality, just as actual, just as factual, just as substantial as anything we see, hear, touch, taste, or smell in this world. There are legions of angels "a heavenly host" helping us, for which the world has no counter-measures. (Hebrews 1:14)

The psalmist David referred to them as a force of thousands of thousands of chariots (Psalm 68:17). We cannot see God nor His angels with our natural eyes. But they are there, whether we see them or not.

Faith is the means by which we are able to "see" this invisible world. That is belief's true function. Faith is to the spiritual realm what the five senses are to the natural realm. The writer of Hebrews says that faith is "the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). By faith we recognize the existence of the spiritual world and learn to depend on the Lord for His help in our daily life.

"The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them." (Psalm 34:7)

Yes, the Orthodox Church believes that we all have a guardian angel for as we read in Psalm 91:11 "He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways." We must remember that whatever we do, openly or in private, we do in the presence of our guardian angel and that, on the Day of Judgment, the great hosts of the heavenly angels will be gathered around the throne of Christ, and the thoughts, words and deeds of everyone of us will be laid bare before them. May God have mercy on us and save us with the prayers of the holy Archangel Michael and all the bodiless powers of heaven.

MYTHS RERUN

Jesus is a mythical-historical figure surrounded by mystery, conspiracy, and intrigue: according to hits like "The Da Vinci Code," the so-called "Gospel of Judas," and the latest documentaries on TV called "The Last Tomb of Christ." Popular media and culture would have us believe that Jesus and His followers were part of a covert society whose dark secrets have been successfully buried for over two thousand years.

What's the truth? We have to remember that for many of these productions - entertainment is the main factor.

This means that fiction often reigns over fact because fiction is usually more entertaining. However, the early church has spent a lot of time debunking similar myths. It seems absurd to throw away 2,000 years of endorsed historical accounts like the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as well as the writings of the saints of our Church in favor of the same old myths re-packaged for the 21st century.

St. Paul wrote that the "wisdom of this world" is with God, and that often, God's wisdom is foolishness to the world. (1 Cor 17-31)

This rings especially true in our time, where misrepresentations about Jesus Christ's life are seen as exciting entertainment by millions of people (entertainment, by the way, which translates into a lot of profit for production companies and publishers). It's important, now more than ever, to do your research and know the facts.

BASEBALL GAME ADS

While traveling to Baltimore by "light rail" in Maryland this past summer with my oldest son to see the Orioles baseball team play in Camden Yards, I noticed ads on the train promoting the attendance of major league baseball games. The white printed words on a grassy green background were unique, concise, and to the point in giving the message. Here are two examples of them:

> FIRST PITCH: 7:05
>
> WORKDAY FORGOTTEN: 7:06

> GAMES LAST: 3 HOURS
>
> MEMORIES LAST: LIFETIME

However, while viewing them, I decided to use the identical format in promoting the reasons why we should attend the Divine Liturgy. Here are the two "ads" I wrote down while on that train.

> DIVINE LITURGY LASTS: AN HOUR AND A HALF
>
> ETERNITY LASTS: FOREVER

> DIVINE LITURGY: 10:00
>
> ALL EARTHLY CARES LAID ASIDE: 10:01

– Father Daniel Ressetar,
Harrisburg, PA

* * * * * *

Who will eat the kernel of the nut must break the shell.

Memories

It's Huckleberry Time!

If ever you were so fortunate to truly enjoy a huckleberry pie, you will always remember and savor the most delicious treat! We live in Northeastern Pennsylvania – come Springtime we walked the woods and mountains behind our home just to see how many huckleberry bushes were in bloom – this would determine just how lucky we would be come harvest time! These bushes are about a foot high – their small white blossoms were bell shaped – the huckleberries, I remember, came in a few varieties – some a beautiful velvety blue, another in silvery blue and the sweetest of all a shiny black! Some of the mountains we frequented were Spring Mountain, Hunky Dorey, Jelly Cake, and the Flats behind the Reservoir about two miles away – most people picked the huckleberries here but if you were adventurous, as we sometimes were, you could travel a mile further to a beautiful place called The Pines – here the huckleberries grew in more abundance – oh, what a sight to behold! Spasebo, Lord that you have so marvelously blessed us! Another picking place was called Wolves that I remember well! My Mom made lunches for us and when our buckets were about half full we would untie them from our belts, place them on the ground, and hungerly eat our lunches. Someone would tie a rag on the tree as our "sign" – we would then pick all around filling smaller cans to fill the buckets. Oh, now I digress – want to tell you about Patches our loveable "mutskie" – he was a wonderful friend – white with black patches all over – hence the name – his ears were long and floppy, long bushy turned-up tail. Oh, those beautiful brown eyes! When Patches heard Mom rattling the berry cans in the morning, he started yipping and jumping around in happy anticipation of our journey. Mom would say, "Okay, Patches, go wake the kids!" Up the stairs he would bound, jump on our beds, licking our faces. I still remember that little, cold black nose! Such happy memories!! Harry, my brother, grumbled and complained all the way, but we all learned to tune him out. Well, after filling our cans and buckets, we were homeward bound – our spirits lifted – there was a pristine, clear, cold spring of running water! Of course, Patches ran off first to wade and drink – we were all refreshed – the kids in our group caught the crowdads just for fun and released them. There were about ten of young and old in our group but, oh, what comradeship, sense of humor and mostly love and caring! Thank you, God, for so many beautiful people! At the beginning of the season we sold our huckleberries for twenty-five cents a quart, but as the season wore on and they became more plentiful, the prices were reduced to five cents a quart. We picked berries to help defray the cost of our school clothes. If we wanted extra money for movies and candy, we would rest a bit, go out and pick a few more quarts. Late in August the "stoners" ripened – these had larger seeds, still sweet and edible but mainly picked for stamping information on meat products. Going home, we carried our buckets on our backs much as children carry backpacks to house their books today – our backpacks were tied up with flour sacks and chicken feed sacks. Mom baked our own bread, cakes and pies so we had plenty of sacks! On the way home we picked and ate June berries along the paths – boy, were they delicious! A large purple berry on a taller bush. We are now nearing our beautiful reservoir happily because we're almost home with our precious bounty. I now see it as I reminisce and remember all the happy pleasures it provided, camping in Summer at its shores and the beautiful colors of gold, yellow, orange, red and wine in Autumn. I know God provided the evergreens just for a lil' more beauty.

As he grew older, our precious buddy, Patches, was slowly less energetic and sad to say losing his eyesight – we had a sweet calico cat named Thumbelina, who guided and walked with him around our home until the end. How wonderful is our Lord in wisdom hast Thou made them all!!

Forgive me as I digress (you're allowed to do that as you age). Going back to the reservoir – coming home not everyone knew Mom had a "mischievous streak." Patches knew, so when Mom went out on the bridge above the water, she called to him, "Oh, Patches, come here." Obedient puppy always complied – gently Mom urged him into the water as we all watched and cheered as he happily swam around, coming out he shook us with spray!

As I conclude my memories for now, I humbly say, "Oh, Lord, how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all. Spasebo e Dostvedanya!!

Yours in Christ Jesus!
Irene

Please send your MEMORIES to Margaret Pysarchyk, 2125 Garfield St., Lorain OH 44055 or email at mypysarchyk@hotmail.com. Any St. Nicholas or Christmas memories anyone?

THE TURKEY POPPED OUT OF THE OVEN

The Turkey popped out of the oven
and rocketed in to the air;
It knocked every plate off the table
and partly demolished a chair.
It ricocheted into a corner
and burst with a deafening boom,
Then splattered all over the kitchen,
Completely obscuring the room.
It stuck to the walls and the windows,
it totally coated the floor,
There was turkey attached to the ceiling,
where there had never been turkey
before...
It blanketed every appliance,
it smeared every saucer and bowl;
there wasn't a way I could stop it;
that turkey was out of control.
I scraped and I scraped with displeasure
and thought with chagrin as I mopped,
That I would never again stuff a turkey
with popcorn that hadn't been popped.

by Jack Prelutsky

VETERANS DAY

On November 11 we honor all U.S. veterans. The armistice that ended World War I was signed on November 11, 1918, and the following year President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as Armistice Day, to be a day of remembrance. The date became a federal holiday in 1938. In 1954, the name was changed by Congress to Veterans Day, to honor all U.S. veterans.

We have all heard the haunting melody of "Taps." It's the song that gives us that lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But do you know the story behind the song?

It all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing, Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who was severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward the encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son.

The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission to give his son a full military burial despite his enemy status.

His request was only partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was denied, since the soldier was a Confederate.

But out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted.

The haunting melody, which we now know as "Taps" used at military funerals, was born.

Day is done
Gone the sun
From the lakes
From the hills
From the sky

All is well,
safely rest.
God is nigh.

Fading light
Dims the sight
And a star
Gems the sky,
Gleaning bright

From afar,
Drawing nigh,
Falls the night.

Thanks and praise,
For our days,
Neath the sun,
Neath the stars,
Neath the sky,

As we go,
This we know,
God is nigh.

WINTER'S GRACE

Youth is not a time of life – it is a state of mind. It is not a matter of ripe cheeks, red lips and supple knees; it is a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions; it is a freshness of the deep springs of life.

Youth means a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over love of ease. This often exists in a person of fifty more than in a young person of twenty.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years; people grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair – these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust.

Whether seventy or sixteen, there is in every being's heart the love of wonder, the sweet amazement of the stars and starlike things and thoughts, the undaunted challenge of events, the unfailing childlike appetite for what comes next, and the joy and the game of life.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

In the central place of your heart there is a wireless station; so long as it receives messages of beauty, hope, cheer, courage, grandeur from the earth, from others and from God, so long are you young.

When the wires are all down and all the central place of your heart is covered with the snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then have you grown old indeed and may God have mercy on you.

Anonymous

LIGHTER MOMENT

A little boy found something unique to give thanks for. As his parents listened, he prayed, "And God bless Mommy and Daddy ... and thank you for sending Jesus to wash away our sins ... so that we can have new ones."

* * * * * *

The early Church did not distinguish the intellectual and practical spheres as separate domains: instead, the transformation of the believer through Scripture was a moral and mental exercise.

SOBORNOST

In a democratic society, one may assume that the notion of "reception" means the active interest and formal involvement of all the people of God in Church affairs. In reality this does not occur as one might expect. Certainly, never in Church history have all believers been asked, one by one, to indicate their reaction, nor have the people generally been enthusiastic to intervene.

"Metropolitan Emilianos warns us:

> Let us not, therefore, idealize the whole idea of "reception" by thinking that participation by all in the Church's decisions is realistic. Only a small number are ready to contribute and to react. Only few are active, able and interested in formulating sound opinion.

Our age suffers from an obsession with regard to the interplay of majority and minority voices. In every public affair, the people's response is counted to such a degree as to determine the fate of a nation or of vital social issues. But precisely this excessive confidence on an unstable and uninformed "public" – a public which today shouts "Hosanna" and tomorrow "Crucify Him" – shows the fragility of such criterion. The Church, although it follows attentively the currents of opinion, must not depend exclusively on such suppositions. Adamantios noted rightly the attitude the Church must posit in expressing true teaching:

> The Catholic Church, upon the truth only, justly, piously and saintly, runs its affairs. Those who have gone astray and fallen to error, they are far away from that truth, although in words pretending that they know the truth, but in reality rejected far from the truth.

Saint Basil, writing in 373, states that the Church treats problems in the life of its believers by relying upon a consolidated "ethos" or "thesmos" transmitted to us by holy men. Such a policy is easily understood by the very nature of human beings. What is regarded this moment as majority can easily turn into a minority. Likewise, the minority can, with clever manipulation, suddenly gain more followers until it is the majority.

Exactly because the Church is not a human-centered society, she formulates her decrees after awaiting guidance from above, by turning to Christ in critical moments of frustration and asking for the descent of the Holy Spirit. Taking into consideration the view of the congregation, *sensus fidelium,* is one thing. Pronouncing the last decisive word on personal opinions is another matter. Without ignoring the *desiderata* of the people, the responsible leaders of the church must decide, in prayer and wisdom, the Truth of "the faith delivered once for all." The Church has never made decisions on matters of faith on the basis of plebiscites or gallup polls.

Fr. Michael Dahulich, PhD
Dean of St. Tikhon
Theological Seminary
So. Canaan, PA 18459

(Editor's Notes: This article was prepared before there was a need to call the Council this month in Pittsburgh. It is relevant as it clearly outlines the reason for the policies which will guide the meeting.)

FUNDS

ALASKA: Ethel Watlock, Alexandra Ryan

MISSION: Marie Holowatch, Olga Dzembo

BOTH ALASKA AND MISSION: Mary K. Zemanik, George and Ludmilla Sebastian in memory of Marie Yakovleva

POSTAGE: Helen Sadow, John Holak, Mary Sernak, Eva Baker, Leo Peter O'Filon, Alma Canfield

* * * * * *

I do not need a special day
to bring you to my mind.
The days I do not think of you
are very hard to find.
They say time heals all sorrow
and helps us to forget.
But time so far has only proved
how much I miss you yet.
All my love … forever.

Undique (from everywhere)

When the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, God fed His people with bread that mysteriously appeared every morning (Exodus 16:4; Deut 8:3). Called MANNA, which is a Hebrew word meaning "What is it?", it resembled coriander seed but tasted like a honey wafer. (Exodus 16:31)

MANNA – the "grain of heaven" – miraculously rained down on them, but was not always appreciated by the grumbling Hebrews. (Ps 78:24; Num 11:6-7)

In the New Testament, Jesus used the image of manna to teach about Himself as the "Bread of Life". (John 6:31-35)

You must begin every task, even the smallest, with prayer appealing to God's power for help in this duty which faces you; you must make an effort of raising it to a higher level; then you will not, and cannot, commit any bad action.

The world is facing a moral crisis of serious dimensions. Before in society, we had a sense of right and wrong. Now we do whatever we want. Society is growing ever more tolerant towards extramarital affairs, pornography, unwed mothers, using sex and nudity as a sales tool, etc. For a time, there was an effort to preserve the appearance of propriety. Our senses are gradually getting numbed. A warden recently said: "Ten years ago when kids came in off the street, I could talk to them about right and wrong. But these kids coming in now have no idea of what I'm talking about."

One of the questions some people who are born into Orthodoxy have for adult converts is why they would choose such a demanding faith? The irony is that social science research suggests that demanding religious groups tend to grow, while those that make things easier for their adherents tend to decline.

Editor's Notes

A good harvest of grain or vegetables requires knowledge, investment, timing, and hard work. Yet nothing happens without the right combination of sun, water and temperature.



The same is true in other fields. The Apostle Paul reminds us that some do the planting, others water but God gives the increase. We do our work together to keep The Orthodox Herald coming. Some give. Some write articles. Some encourage. Some distribute copies. And through it all, God in mysterious ways, meets needs and produces results in a harvest of our overflowing gratitude.

So we give thanks to you, for all you do in helping to cultivate, plant, water and weed. And we give thanks to God for giving the increase and life itself. That is the ultimate joy of this Thanksgiving season!

Some beautiful oak trees stand tall around my house. Every fall I notice that some of them retain their crisp dried leaves long after the maples, elms, and others become bare. Even the strong winds of winter and the early spring rains do not completely strip their boughs. But as springtime progresses, the scene changes. Some buds appear at the tips of the twigs. Soon the dry remnants of the preceding season drop away because of the surging forces of new life within. The Holy Spirit graciously works that way on us when we turn to Him.

When all our efforts to turn over a new leaf or pluck off the old ones meet defeat, we can take a lesson from the story about the mighty oak. Then we can thank God for the power of the Holy Spirit that is within us, who will take care of the "old leaves."

"O heavenly King the Comforter the Spirit of truth who art everywhere present and fillest all things. Come and abide in us."

Mir Prosim

Matushka Nina

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*Dom Yuchone in memory of Dr. Peter Kotser

*Peter Tarasovich in memory of parents Peter and Anna Tarasovich

*Irene Weinacker in memory of parents Harry and Mary Patnychuk and brothers Dan and John

*In memory of parents John and Mary Holowatch, brothers Peter and Paul and sister Olga. For good health of sister Mary and Nicholas and his wife Marie

*George and Ludmilla Sebastian in memory of Marie Popoff, Feodor Popoff and Peter Yakovlev

*Matushka Nina in memory of Matushka Mary Ann Bohush, Matushka Olga Chanda and Dr. Peter Kotser and happy birthday to Julia Golit

LIGHTER MOMENT

A 4-year-old boy was asked to return thanks before Thanksgiving dinner. His fam ily bowed their heads in expectation. He began his prayer, thanking God for all his friends, naming them one by one. Then he thanked God for Mommy, Daddy, brother, sister, Grandma, Grandpa, and all his aunts and uncles.

Then he began to thank God for the food. He gave thanks for the turkey, the dressing, the fruit salad, the cranberry sauce, the sweet potato croquettes, the rutabaga, the pies, the cakes, even the Cool Whip (are you hungry now?). Then he paused and everyone waited – and waited. After a long silence, the young fellow looked up at his mother and asked, "If I thank God for the broccoli, won't he know that I'm lying?"



I have received so many wonderful responses to the recipe for Baniki, which was submitted by Pani Martha Zeleniak. It seems that once people made it, they made it again and again. Pani Martha has kindly shared another recipe with us. It is for Pagach. Some of you can still remember this baked on the bottom of the oven in your mother's old wood or coal stove. You can get the same type of crust by baking it on a pizza stone.

PAGACH

Dough
10 cups flour
2 packages dry yeast
2 sticks margarine
2 eggs (beaten)
1 1/2 tablespoons salt
1/4 cup sugar
2 1/2 cups milk (sometimes a little more is needed)

Filling: Potato or sweet cabbage filling

Potato: Boil potatoes. Mash with sauteed onion and/or cheese

Cabbage: Cut cabbage as fine as possible. Saute in butter and oil with chopped onion until soft.

Knead all ingredients together until well blended as for bread dough. Let rise double in bulk in a warm place. Punch down, let rise once again. Turn out on floured board separate into 8 to 10 portions. Let rise until light. With a rolling pin, flatten enough to place about 1 cup filling in center of each round of dough. Bring together to shape a round ball. Let rest about 1/2 hour with filling, then carefully roll out as thin as you want it. Place on a cookie sheet. Bake until golden brown and then butter on both sides. Rounds should be about 14 inches in diameter.

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THE NATIVITY FAST

The Nativity Fast begins on November 15/28 and continues until December 25/January 7. It is prescribed for all Orthodox Christians, not only for bishops, priests, deacons and monastics. We should not be glum at its approach but should approach it with joyful anticipation.

Just as athletes approach training camp or military recruits approach basic or advanced training programs, serious Orthodox Christians approach the fasts of the Church as opportunities for spiritual renewal and for growth in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

Each person chooses whether they will observe the Nativity Fast and how. However, our Lord Jesus Christ reminds us that when we fast, we should fast in secret. Fasting is an effort to improve, to be a better Christian and to recapture the joy of life in Christ.

The Nativity Fast is the time of preparation leading to the celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ. It is a deliberate journey set forth by the Church. With God's help and a serious approach, the Nativity Fast is a time of enrichment, a time of renewal.

May the Nativity Fast be a time of joyful anticipation for you. Until you hear the wonderful words on the Nativity: "God is with us! God is with us! God is with us! S'nami Boh!

* * * * * *

What a sick man likes to eat is his medicine. Russian Proverb

Home Bible Reading Schedule

NOVEMBER 2008

1. Cor 12:27-13:8	**16. 1 Cor 4:9-16**
2. Gal 1:11-19	17. 1 Thes 1:1-5
3. Phil 4:10-23	18. 1 Thes 1:6-10
4. Col 1:1-2,7-11	19. 1 Thes 2:1-8
5. Col 1:18-23	20. 1 Thes 2:9-14
6. Col 1:24-29	21. Heb 9:1-7
7. Col 2:1-7	22. 2 Cor 8:1-5
8. Heb 2:2-10	**23. Eph 2:4-10**
9. Gal 2:16-20	24. Eph 6:10-17
10. Col 2:13-20	25. 1 Thes 3:9-13
11. Col 2:20-3:3	26. 1 Thes 4:1-12
12. Col 3:17-4:1	27. 1 Thes 5:1-8
13. Heb 7:26-8:2	28. 1 Thes 5:9-13
14. Col 4:10-18	29. 2 Cor 11:1-6
15. 2 Cor 5:1-10	**30. 1 Cor 4:9-16**

BIBLE STUDY

Next month we finish the suggested reading cycle of the Epistles. It is interesting to state some overall notes on the readings and their authors.

Did you realize that thirteen of the twenty-seven writings of the New Testament are letters written by Apostle Paul and that they constitute one quarter of the bulk of the New Testament? If we add this to the parts of the Acts of the Apostles where St. Paul is the main character, this portion climbs to almost a third of the New Testament? The portion devoted to the life and ministry of Jesus as written in the four Gospels is only slightly higher, but not by much.

This legacy is not simply a matter of quantity. St. Paul's writings are the earliest existing writings of the Christian movement. They are real letters written to actual congregations/parishes whose lives are reflected in them. They are personal letters in the sense that St. Paul's desires, emotions, thinking processes and personality are vividly shown.

Apostle Paul was a major figure in the first, formative generation of the Christian movement. However, his writings are not restricted to their value as source materials on this period, they also provide a window into the circumstances lying behind them offering not only the original readers to whom they were addressed but to those following them helping to shape the history of Christianity and culture as a whole. Their influence has been pervasive and far-reaching.

To summarize, his letters are of inestimable value as they give us a window into Christianity which had just come into existence.

ST. DIMITRI, BISHOP OF ROSTOV

A great hierarch, preacher, writer and ascetic, he was born near Kiev in 1651 and died in 1709. Among many other glorious works of instruction that he wrote, especially noteworthy is the translation and publication of the Lives of the Saints. He foresaw his own death three days before and died while at prayer. He was a great light of the Russian Church and of Orthodoxy in general. He had heavenly visions during his life; he served the Lord with zeal and entered into the heavenly Kingdom.